

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 COTONO 00822 131829Z

70

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 IO-10 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 /069 W
----- 034434

R 131632Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7256

INFO AMEMBASSY LOME

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 822

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINS, DM

SUBJ: LABOR: ARREST OF DAHOMEAN FREE TRADE UNION LEADERS

REF A. LOME 1315 B. COTONOU A-39

1. ON JUNE 7 DAHOMEAN LABOR LEADERS PROSPER TOHOUN AND ROMAIN AKPAKOUN, REPRESENTING THE "PROVISIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF FREE TRADE UNIONS OF DAHOMEY," WENT TO LOME TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO EMMANUEAL BART-PLANGE (GHANAIAN) A STAFF MEMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LABOR CENTER (AALC), FOR TRANSMISSION TO DAVID BROMBARD IN NEW YORK. LETTER REQUESTED AALC FINANCIAL SUPPORT (\$1,900) OF THEIR EFFORT TO WREST CONTROL OF NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTRAL, THE UNION NATIONAL DES SYNDICATS DES TRAVAILLEUR DU DAHOMEY (UNSTD) FROM PRO-COMMUNISTS, WHICH IS TO CULMINATE IN A CONGRESS IN COTONOU JUNE 28. MONEY ALLEGEDLY NEEDED TO PAY FOR AGITATION IN PROVINCES AND TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR ANTI-COMMUNIST DELEGATES TO COTONOU. BART-PLANGE BROUGHT A COPY OF LETTER TO COTONOU ON JUNE 9 WITH REQUEST FOR OUR ADVICE.

2. WE TOLD BART-PLANGE WE CONSIDERED THE EXERCISE POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE AND URGED HIM NOT TO FORWARD LETTER UNTIL AMB (WHO WAS ON ONE DAY TRIP IN BUSH THAT DAY) COULD CONSIDER IT. FOLLOWING DAY WE DECIDED TO SEND DCM TO LOME JUNE 11 WITH STRONG
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COTONO 00822 131829Z

NEGATIVE ADVICE FOR GEORGE MARTENS, HEAD OF AALC OFFICE THERE,

AT MEETING ARRANGED BY EMBASSY LOME. BEFORE REF B FROM LOME HAD ARRIVED, INFORMING US OF THE ARRESTS, WHICH WE WERE UNAWARE OF, MARTENS CONCEDED THAT THE ARRESTS SOUNDED THE DEATH KNEEL TO PROPOSAL. HE ALSO AGREED KEEP BART-PLANGE OUT OF DAHOMEY UNTIL THIS AFFAIR BLOWS OVER.

3. COMMENT: COPY OF LETTER, BY TOHOUN AND ENCLOSING A PETITION SIGNED BY 27 OTHER MINI-UNION HEADS, VERY LIKELY FELL INTO HANDS OF DAHOMEAN AUTHORITIES WHO COULD WELL MISINTERPRET AND EVEN TWIST MATTER INTO "AMERICAN CONSPIRACY". GOVT, WHICH IS BACKING THE PRO-COMMUNISTS, WOULD SURELY BRAND ANY AALC SUPPORT AS "AMERICAN IMPERIALIST" INTERFERENCE IN COUNTRY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

4. TOHOUN AND HIS SUPPORTERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A MINORITY IN THE DAHOMEY LABOR MOVEMENT. THEIR CHANCES OF SUCCEEDING, WITH THE GOVT IN THE OTHER CAMP, WERE NIL.

5. BACKGROUND: THE DAHOMEAN GOVT HAD BEEN UNDER CRITICISM FROM UNSTD SECGEN TIMOTHEE ADANLIN (REF B) WHO HAS HAD INDISTINCT BACKGROUND. AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE GOVT, FIVE MEMBERS OF THE UNSTD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, ON MAY 29, SUSPENDED ADANLIN FROM HIS POST ON A TRUMPED-UP TECHNICALITY AND REPLACED HIM WITH SOVIET SUPPORTED ROMAIN VILLON-GUEZP. FORMER HAD CALLED ON PRES KEREKOU TO GIVE UNIONS GREATER PARTICIPATION IN REVOLUTIONARY INSTITUTIONS AND HIGHER WAGES. EVEN IF NO CHARGES ARE BROUGHT UP AGAINST TOHOUN AND AKPAKOUN, THEY WILL PROBABLY BE HELD IN JAIL AT LEAST UNTIL THE UNSTD CONGRESS IS CONCLUDED TO ENSURE THAT THEY DO NOT INTERFERE WITH THE ELECTION OF A LEADERSHIP ACCEPTABLE TO THE KEREKOU REGIME.
BNGLE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARRESTS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975COTONO00822
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750207-0447
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750649/aaaabsme.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LOME 1315, 75 COTONOU A-39
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>; WITHDRAWN <21 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <23 JUN 2005 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <23 JUN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR: ARREST OF DAHOMEAN FREE TRADE UNION LEADERS
TAGS: ELAB, PINS, DM, (BART-PLANGE, EMMANUEL), (BROMBARD, DAVID), (AKPAKOUN), (TOHOUM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006